



## **REPORT BACK ON CONFERENCE/SEMINAR**

**REPORT TO:** Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2006  
**REPORT OF:** Phil McGrahan, International Assistant  
**TITLE:** Partner City Market  
**DATE:** 21 – 24 July 2006  
**VENUE:** Dresden, Germany

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### **1 Recommendation**

- 1.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination is recommended to note the report on Coventry's participation at a partner city event in Dresden and the outcomes of the visit.

### **2 Background**

- 2.1 The City of Coventry has 26 twin cities throughout the world. Most of these links were formed in the spirit of peace and reconciliation after the end of World War II. The link with Dresden was formalised in 1959. The common fate of the two cities during World War II and their many years of efforts for reconciliation and understanding among people resulted in the twinning of the two cities. Dresden is the capital of the eastern German state of Saxony and is located close to Germany's borders with the Czech Republic and Poland.
- 2.2 As part of Dresden's 800<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations the city invited all of its partner cities to exhibit at an open-air exhibition in one of the city's main shopping areas. In addition each partner city was also asked to provide some local entertainment for the central stage area. As Dresden's oldest partner city, Coventry's participation at this event was a priority for the city.
- 2.3 Other cities represented at the event were: Wroclaw, Poland, Columbus, Ohio, USA, Florence, Italy, Gostyn, Poland, Hamburg, Germany, Ostrava, Czech Republic, Rotterdam, Netherlands, Salzburg, Austria, Skopje, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, St. Petersburg, Russia, Strasbourg, France, Toulouse, France and Brazzaville, Republic of Congo.
- 2.4 Coventry was represented by Chris Boyce and Darren O'Shaughnessy from the Communications Team, who staffed an information desk about Coventry throughout the weekend. In addition a local five piece Asian Fusion Band, *Off-License*, performed each day on the stage area.

### 3 Cost of attending

3.1 The total cost of seven representatives attending the event was:

Flights	£1797.96
Insurance	£114.35
Shipping of Exhibition Materials and Literature	£834
Promotional Materials and Gifts	£400
Expenses	£75
Total	£3221.31

The flights, expenses, shipping, gifts and insurance were covered by the International budget. All accommodation, lunches and transfers to and from the airport were covered by the City of Dresden.

### 4 Benefits

- 4.1 Coventry's attendance was to represent the city at a twinning event; to promote the city of Coventry not only as a tourist attraction but also as a place to invest and a willing partner for school exchanges and co-operations.
- 4.2 The link with Dresden dates back to 1959 and was Dresden's first twin city relationship. The city is proud to have a link with Coventry, which has been demonstrated, by this invitation to the City; by the Lord Mayor attending an event earlier this year and also by close co-operation with Coventry Cathedral and the Herbert on cultural projects.
- 4.3 A recent report: 'Coventry's European Future' by Jon Bloomfield highlighted Dresden as one of two twin cities on which Coventry should focus its attention. Participation at this event has assisted in developing relationships between the two international offices and will prove extremely beneficial when exploring partnership links in future.
- 4.4 The exhibition operated from 11am until 10pm each day and over the three days it is estimated that officers spoke to around 500 people. The exhibition was particularly busy during the late afternoon through until it closed. There was also a steady stream of visitors throughout the entire event as the partner city exhibition was part of a bigger 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary event similar in scale to the Godiva Festival.
- 4.5 Visitors to the Coventry stand ranged from people who had a general interest in the city to people looking to visit the UK on holiday and also people who were studying English.
- 4.6 There was also interest from a company who wanted to look into setting up a German Christmas market in Coventry.
- 4.7 The Coventry band 'Off-License' performed on stage at the Partner City Market each day and also performed at a CD launch for a local Dresden band. The band were very well received and managed to sell a good quantity of their CDs while they have been invited back to Dresden next year to promote their next CD.

#### List of background papers

Proper Officer: Roger Hughes  
Author: Phil McGrahan, International Assistant  
Tel Number: 024 7683 3060  
(Any enquiries should be directed to the above)  
Other contributors: Chris Boyce  
Darren O'Shaughnessy

Papers open to public inspection

**Description of paper:** **Location**